855 stand up, and fall down continuously, sometimes on their hands and sometimes on their behinds. They walk on all fours getting so used [481] to it that when they are grown up they catch up with the best runners in this way. [405]

[167] Sometimes the Caribs make incisions to cure some inflammation, but most of the time they do it out of fantasy. It is said that the children are gashed instead of being whipped, but I have not seen it done often. [435]

● 515 [534] The Caribs have no other paternoster than the flute. The first one to awake at the cock's crow plays his flute, and the others imitate him as they awaken. After this they go to bathe in the river. The women and children go at a different time. Because the river is cold they make fires by groups in two or three places where they warm themselves. If they are soaked by sea water or rain, or if they are dirty or overheated by some exertion, they return to wash themselves again. Besides this they never fail to go bathing at noon and in the evening. I think that these baths contribute the most to the preservation of their health, and so do their fasts when they are moderate. [383] The children in order to learn how to swim and become accustomed to the ocean waves, as well as to amuse themselves, lay on small planks. They let themselves drift against the breakers and are driven back into the mouth of a river. Others who are stronger let themselves drift with the current of the river and meet the breakers which are rough and frightening where the river hits them, particularly in the district of cabester [sic] where the sea is rougher and the streams are faster. And when they see someone upside down in the waves, or standing there, they laugh to see them when we would be fearful. [314]

857 [223] The Carib children, having prepared birdlime, cut long poles and attach at the end a very pliable rod which has been smeared with glue. They hold it so that the end is near the flowers where the humming birds find their food. When these birds are not watchful, they hit them with the small rod and having been touched with this rod they remain stuck. The children run quickly, seize them, and tear off the glued feathers, [439] gut the birds, and wrap them in leaves. They dry them in the fire and trade them to the French for hooks and pins. [220] One type of fly makes [262] holes in the sand to live there. The small Caribs kill them, split them in half, and pick out a small sac filled with honey which they eat. [398] The children make horns out of the stem of a certain plant [466], and [534] the men make whistles out of the leg bones of pelicans. [267]

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
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On the other hand, Caribs consider the white man's custom of manuring land as disgusting, and would never knowingly eat food so grown. The finding of dung in a provision ground is sufficient reason for abandoning a part or the whole of the cultivation. A serious dispute arose, while I was in the Reserve, because one family accused members of another family of leaving excrement on their land. Perhaps this is one more reason why the Caribs' gardens are so far from their dwellings.

There does not seem to be any hard and fast rule with regard to the division of labor between the sexes, except such as physical fitness dictates. Hunting, fishing, sawing, land clearing, canoe and house building are obviously men's occupations, here as elsewhere. Work on the provision ground is fairly evenly shared. Twine and cords, torches, shark oil, Carib panniers, manioc sifters, and "couleuvres" are made by men usually, though not exclusively. Vegetable oil (palma Christi, known here as "carapat"), open, radial kitchen and garden baskets (corbeilles), the cleaning and (until recently) spinning of cotton, the preparation of farine and cassava bread—except for the grating of the manioc, at which the men often help—and all other household duties are women's work. Although a Carib be returning straight to his house after a fishing expedition, he expects his women folk to meet him on the shore and to carry the fish home. When compelled to carry a load himself, the Carib man always puts it on his shoulder or back, whereas the women have adopted the Creole negro custom of bearing burdens on the head.

River bathing is a daily habit with all Caribs, but once a month the Carib man takes a special kind of bath in the privacy of his own home with water in which certain herbs have soaked. The names of three so used are: the sensitive plant (*Mimosa pudica*), sou marqué (*Cassia bicapsularis*), and kudjuruk (or kugururk—unidentified). The bath must be taken on the night when the moon is new or "good" (that is, for planting), and its object is that of a spiritual antiseptic, said to counteract and defeat the evil effects of possible sorcery or piaï directed against the bather during the preceding moon.

A few simple remedies used by the Caribs of Dominica today are, in the case of—

Local inflammation: Half of an ember-baked green papaya applied hot as a poultice.

Internal contusion: The gum of the lowland red gommier (*Bursera gummifera*) as a plaster.

Wounds and cuts: The pounded heart of the kanu tree(?), together with salt. Shark oil and pimento leaves are also used, as is the fat of the Tête-Chien boa.

Flux, or intestinal chill: An infusion of the bark or roots of the wild white guava.

9: Ober N-5 (1876-1878) 1895
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The Caribs have an ancient and natural language, such as is peculiar to them, and also a bastard speech, with foreign words, chiefly Spanish, intermixed. Among themselves they always use the natural language, in conversing with Christians the bastard speech. . . . The women also have a different speech from the men. . . . It hath been observed that the men are less amorous than the women; both are naturally chaste; and when those of other nations look even earnestly at them, and laugh at their nakedness, they were wont to say to them, 'you are to look on us only between both the eyes.' . . . Yet, it must be confessed that some have degenerated from that chastity, and many other virtues of their ancestors, the Europeans having taught them many vices,—to the perpetual infamy of the Christian name. . . They are great lovers of cleanliness, bathing every day; are generous, hospitable and honest. . . . It is also a manifest truth, confirmed by daily experience in America, that the holy sacrament of baptism being conferred on these savages, the devil never beats or torments them afterwards as long as they live.[1]

"The Carib boys were compelled to pierce their food suspended from a tree with an arrow, before they could eat it. . . . They are said to have used poisoned arrows, dipping them in what must have been the urrari poison, obtained from Guiana. . . . Like many natives, they eradicated the beard and the hair on other parts of the body. . . They compressed the skulls of new-born infants; and a hatred of the Arrowaks was instilled. . . . Their cabins were built of poles fixed circularly in the ground and drawn together at the top, covered with palm leaves, and in the centre of each village was a building larger than the others for public assemblage.

"The Caribbeans are a handsome, well-shaped people, of a smiling countenance, middle stature, having broad shoulders

[1] See Davies's "History of the Caribby Islands." London, 1666.

If fish forms such a large part of the diet of the Caribs, it is because boating and fishing have always been a favorite occupation for them. The canoes which they still use today are hollowed out from the trunks of large trees, particularly the gum-tree, the giant of the forest. The word canoe is, moreover, like the word hammock, a word of Carib origin, imported into Europe by the Spanish. These boats are today used only for fishing, but formerly the Caribs—who are excellent seamen and even have, according to certain writers, some notion of the stars and know how to calculate time and the seasons—ventured quite far out to sea and went easily from one island to another. They were, besides, admirable swimmers, righting their canoes when they capsized, while the women kept afloat in the water, carrying their children at their breasts.

Their weapons for hunting and war were formerly bows and arrows, with tips carved from fish bones or tortoise-shell and often poisoned with the juice of certain plants. Of an unequalled skill from childhood in handling bows and arrows, the Caribs quickly became as adept at using guns when they were given them. The club, called bouton or boutou was also a powerful weapon in their hands. It was often carved and the hatchings were painted in various colors. As for the war hatchets of polished stone, found in the excavations on Dominica /140/ and other islands, they seem rather to have belonged to the Tainos than to the Carib (1). These hatchets bear a

1. Beuchat (H.) Manuel d'archeologie americaine /Manual of American Archeology/. Paris, 1912.

great resemblance to those found in the Guianas and in northern Brazil; there is a fine collection of them in the Museum of Roseau.

The arts seem to have been very little developed among the Caribs of the Antilles, but some crude drawings or petroglyphs found on the rocks in the islands which they inhabited have been attributed to them, particularly in the vicinity of the town of Trois Rivieres, in Guadeloupe, and in the island of St. John.

Of naturally cleanly habits the Caribs bathed every day in the sea or in the rivers before staining their bodies with roucou. They have retained the habit of taking frequent baths and this hygienic care has protected them from a great number of illnesses; yaws, which is very common among the blacks of the Antilles, is rare in the Carib population.

11: Taylor E-5 (ca. 1930-1937)1946
ST13 Callinago ST13

its tongue "to break the thread" (?) so that it may the sooner learn to speak. Then she stretches the limbs, pinches the nose, and "gives the head a nice shape" by pressing the forehead with her thumb-pads upward and backward from the supraorbital ridges toward the crown. This proceeding is continued by massaging the forehead, using a circular and upward motion of the palm of the hand. No measures are taken today to maintain the head-shape thus given, and "only old-timers bother to make a child look nice, nowadays." A bulbous or protruding forehead is considered ugly.

The accouchée has to submit to a strict regime for forty days, but the newborn child is suckled in what to us is a haphazard way, given arrowroot or *Canna* starch and herbal teas from the start, and handled by all members of the household.

The baby-name given to the child at birth is today that by which it is registered; while the "true" name, chosen by the sponsor of like sex, is that now given in baptism. This rite, at which the parents do not assist, usually takes place a month or so after birth, and is followed by either a feast or dance or both. Godparents are chosen rather for their social or economic status than for any spiritual qualities. The relationship is, however, taken very seriously, and parents and godparents address one another as "compère" and "commère." The ears of female infants are pierced and a thread passed through the hole in order to keep it open until such time as rings are acquired.

Apart from the baby-name and patronymic (baptismal names are, at least among older Caribs, not easily divulged) modern Caribs are supposed to have surnames, which they call titres *titles*. But these are infrequently and irregularly employed, and usually consist of the given name of a grandfather or greatgrandfather. Brothers sometimes bear different "titles"! Illegitimate children take their father's name (as patronymic) and "title."

As soon as they learn to walk, Carib children follow their mothers or big sisters to the river morning and evening, and so acquire early a taste for bathing and the habit of carrying little calabashes of water or other loads more in play than in earnest. Soon their fathers or big brothers make for them tiny carry-slis (shoulder-baskets), traps, fishing rods, etc., so that play and work merge into one another. One of the few non-utilitarian amusements—for some grown-ups as well as for children—is to "run the waves" (*courir lames*), a local variety of surf-riding which Breton also recorded. When available, the "seat" of a canoe—a plank seat about 9 inches wide by 2½ to 3 ft long—is used; but with a favorable surf, very good "rides" may be had without it, merely by stiffening the body and using the outstretched hands as a rudder.

13: Hodge & Taylor
515, 754, 777, 782

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[For information on ritual baths for the purposes of counteracting sorcery, and giving good luck, see category 789]

13: Hodge & Taylor N. E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

the chief native foodstuffs. They are usually boiled, rarely roasted, but in either case always in the green condition (unripe). The «pepete» (i.e. the inflorescence bud) of this species or of the banana is crushed and its juice is applied as a cure for ulcers. Like those of the balisiers (*Heliconia* spp.) the leaves of both plantains and bananas are much used as wrapping material.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Musa paradisiaca Linnaeus subsp. **sapientum** (Linnaeus) O. Kuntze, Rev. Gen. 2: 692. 1891.

Banana. — Figue. — Babába.

The distribution of the banana is identical with that of the plantain.

Bananas are hardly as important as plantains in the Caribs' diet, but they are an important commercial export crop in Dominica. A drink was formerly made from the fruit but today it is generally eaten ripe out of hand.

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

ZINGIBERACEAE. Ginger Family.

Aframomum granum-paradisi (Hooker) K. Schumann in Engler, Pflanzenreich 20: 213. 1904.

Grains-of-Paradise Amomum. — Poivre Guinée.

This African plant was originally described from Sierra Leone. Various species of this fragrant-leaved genus have pungent seeds which, in the Middle Ages, were a popular substitute for pepper. Today they are still used medicinally and as a flavoring agent (22).

Caribs frequently cultivate poivre guinée near their dwellings for they utilize the seeds as a spice. The leaves, considered to be a charm, are rubbed on the body when bathing and are constituents of a ritual bath (described under *Croton micranthus*) for unlucky canoes. A similar bath is given to their hunting dogs. A tea is made from the leaves for stomach ache and the seeds are put into rum as a «chauffe» to excite dogs.

Specimen citation: 121 (T), 3304.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

X824

Alpinia speciosa (Wendland) K. Schumann, Fl. Kaiser-Wilhelmal. 29. 1887.

Languas speciosa Small, Fl. Southeast. U. S. 307, 1375. (1913).
Shell Flower. — Lavandre.

[247] A plant of the East Indies, long cultivated for ornament in the West Indies and often persisting after cultivation. Lavandre has become naturalized in various parts of Dominica, particularly at lower elevations.

[278] A « tea » made by the Caribs from the leaves and flowers of this species is supposedly efficacious against indigestion or « wind in the stomach ». Further uses of this species as ingredients in ritual baths are described under *Ipomoea pes-caprae* and *Ocimum micranthum*.

[515]

Specimen citation: 23 (T), 3211.

Curcuma longa Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 2. 1753.
Turmeric. — Saffran.

A native of the East Indies, where it is grown for its tubers which form an ingredient of curry powders, saffran has been introduced into the West Indies and is generally cultivated by the Dominica Indian as a dye plant.

[386]

The Caribs use the carrot-like tubers to give a yellow stain to weaving materials obtained from *mâbi* (*Anthurium palmatum* and *Monstera pertusa*) and other lianas. Certain round baskets made by the Indian women are often woven in two colors, yellow (from *Curcuma longa*) and mauve (from *Picramnia pentandra*).

[285]

Specimen citation: 8 (T), 3330.

Hedychium coronarium Koenig ex Retz. Obs. 3: 73. 1783.
Ginger Lily. — Gingembre Douleur, Canne Riviere.

This species, of southeastern Asia, has become naturalised in moist places on many of the West Indian islands.

[271] The Caribs of Dominica employ the leaves to make a « tea » used for fever, while the roots enter into the manufacture of a concoction which is a supposed cure for any internal pain. A chopped up decoction of the plant in water is also drunk as a « cure » for gonorrhea. For another use of this species see *Ipomoea pes-caprae*.

Specimen citation: 34B (T).

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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fish from biting by causing their mouths to become soft. Corossol leaves are also boiled alone to produce a tea drunk by those with colds and fever, or by women in labour (parturition); the leaves are also used for bathing (adults or children).

Specimen citation: 398.

Annona reticulata Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 537. 1753.

Custard Apple, Bullock's Heart. — Cachima, Cachima Coeur de Boeuf. — *alakáliua* (m), *kasíma*.

This is another common West Indian species, varieties of which produce edible fruits.

The bark is employed by the Caribs to bandage sprains and dislocations; when so used it is kept moist with salt water. A tea is brewed from cachima leaves, together with the leaves of the pigeon pea [*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.], and this is drunk by individuals suffering from fever.

Specimen citation: 3358.

Annona squamosa Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 537. 1753.

Sweetsop, Sugar Apple. — Pomme Canelle. — *kalíkiri*.

Like the preceding species this small West Indian tree is widely cultivated for its edible fruit.

The leaves are made into a « tea », drunk as a supposed cure for a painful spleen (a common complaint among Caribs).

Specimen citation: no herbarium material collected.

Guatteria caribaea Urban, Symb. Ant. 4: 240. 1905.

Guatteria ouregou Grisebach, Fl. Br. W. I. 7, 1859, *non* Dunal.

Cananga caribaea Britton in Br. & Wils. Bot. P. R. (Sci. Surv. Puerto Rico & Virg. Isls. 5). 311. 1924.

Maho (often spelled mahot, mahoe, or mahaut) Noir, Bois Violon.

A medium-sized forest tree found in Puerto Rico and recorded in the Lesser Antilles from Guadeloupe to Grenada.

Bois violon possesses a good wood often made by the Caribs into boards. Young specimens of this species are also fashioned into masts for dugouts. The strong bark furnishes a rope fiber from which are constructed the halyards, etc., for sails. Such

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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wound around the left wrist and forefinger. The spindle was set rotating by rolling its lower end (below the whorl) sharply down the thigh with the right hand. The thread thus spun was rolled onto the spindle-shank (above the guard) and the process recommenced. Cotton thread thus spun was used for weaving hammocks [39], head and leg bands [40], and more recently for mending clothes. Today cotton fiber is used principally for stuffing pillows and mattresses, and for calking canoes. However, a ritual bath, given to the mother after childbirth, utilized coton noir; it is discussed under *Ocimum micranthum*.

Specimen citation: 114 (T), 115 (T), 2541.

Hibiscus esculentus Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 696. 1753.
Abelmoschus esculentus Moench, Meth. 617. 1794.

Okra. — Gombo. — *inéku* (see also *Lonchocarpus* spp.).

A native of the Old World tropics, this species is widely cultivated. It was first recorded from the West Indies in 1750 (21), and is a familiar garden vegetable in Dominica.

Okra is either eaten as a vegetable or is used as an ingredient in a local soup known as « calalou ». However, a Carib hunter must not put any gombo in the pot with the game he cooks or his dogs and gun would lose their power of taking any more game of that sort. The leaves are used as shampoo in washing the hair to promote growth. A superstition also exists that eaten gombo tops will cause one to meet the persons who have been speaking ill of one.

Specimen citation: 136 (T).

Hibiscus tiliaceus Linnaeus, Sp. Pl. 694. 1753.
Hibiscus elatus Swartz, Prodr. 102. 1788.
Pariti tiliaceum St. Hilaire, Fl. Bras. Merid. 1: 256. 1827.

Mahoe. — Maho (also spelled mahot, or mahaut) Doux. — *uainiu*, *uáiu*.

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[39] It is thought that the Island Caribs first introduced the cotton hammock into the Lesser Antilles from continental South America.

[40] Such articles were all listed by CHANCA (69) in his famous letter, and it is interesting to note that certain of these are still woven by the Caribs of Guiana.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
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814 x

Ipomoea spp.
pútuku

Several wild twining species of *Ipomoea* (other than *I. pes-caprae*) are to be found in Dominica.

Leaves of certain species are employed by the Caribs to rub the body when bathing, and their use is considered to bring health and luck to the user (see *Eryngium foetidum*).

Specimen citation: 3318, 3323.

[515 777]

BORAGINACEAE. Borage Family.

Bourreria succulenta Jacquin, Enum. 14. 1760.
Tawai, Taway. — *taudi.*

A small tree of the West Indies and common in Dominica at lower elevations.

From the inner bark of this species is obtained an emollient fluid which the Indians often use to soothe inflamed eyes, a disease from which they frequently suffer. The wood burns easily and so the Caribs sometimes use it for torches [50].

Specimen citation: 17 (T).

[228 164 373]

Cordia reticulata Vahl, Eclog. Am. 3: 5. 1807.
Coco Poule.

A medium-sized tree of the Lesser Antilles and Venezuela and common in Dominica at lower and middle elevations.

The leaves of coco poule are believed to relieve headache. When used for headache they are placed on the forehead of the suffering Carib.

Specimen citation: 3359.

[278]

Tournefortia bicolor Swartz, Prodr. 40. 1788.
Mirette.

This species occurs throughout tropical America.

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[50] Because of this use the tree has sometimes been called bois chandelle, but should not be confused with *Erithalis fruticosa*, the true Carib bois chandelle.